

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Grant Application Deadline March 31**

Sportsmen's clubs and other interested parties are reminded that the Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative application deadline is March 31, the Department of Natural Resources announced today. The DHIP is a cooperative grant program designed to support private land deer habitat improvement projects in the Upper Peninsula.

Now in its fourth year, the Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative fosters cooperative projects between non-government organizations and the DNR that will enhance habitat for white-tailed deer. The initiative is funded by the state's Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP). In 2012, a total of \$50,000 will be made available through a competitive grant process. Proposals for deer habitat improvement projects in the Upper Peninsula seeking from \$2,000 to \$10,000 in cooperative funding will be considered.

Organizations, either independent or affiliated with larger groups, with a formal mission to promote wildlife conservation and/or hunting, will be eligible to apply for the cooperative grants. The habitat improvement projects can take place on privately-owned land, Commercial Forest Act-enrolled land, or other non-state-owned land. Projects that provide public access through foot traffic will be prioritized. Representatives of sportsmen's groups or conservation organizations are encouraged to contact their local DNR wildlife biologist for help in developing acceptable projects.

"There are three primary goals applicants should strive to meet," said DNR Private Lands Wildlife Biologist Bill Scullon. "The projects should produce tangible deer habitat improvements, build long-term partnerships between the DNR and sportsmen's clubs or other groups, and identify ways to showcase the work to the public."

In 2011, three deer habitat improvement projects were funded -- the planting of red oak seedlings in Mackinac County; wildlife orchard plantings in Dickinson County; and the rehabilitation of historic wildlife opening with clovers and other forage in Ontonagon County.

"These deer habitat improvement projects are good examples of how sportsmen's clubs and other organizations can partner with DNR wildlife biologists to help improve or create vital deer habitat in their local area," Scullon said.

Project applications are due by March 31, and successful applicants will be notified by April 14. Proposed projects will be evaluated and competitively scored on a range of criteria by a multi-disciplinary selection committee. For an application package, contact Bill Scullon by phone at 906-563-9247, by fax at 906-563-5802, or by email at [scullonh@michigan.gov](mailto:scullonh@michigan.gov), or at the DNR Norway Field Office, located at 520 US Hwy 2 West in Norway.

Created by legislation in 1971, DRIP is funded with a \$1.50 allocation from each deer license sold, except for senior licenses, equaling \$2.2 to \$2.8 million in funding annually. For more information about deer management in Michigan, go online to [www.michigan.gov/deer](http://www.michigan.gov/deer).

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr).